



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

OPERATION ICE PALACE **SALESMAN PLEADS GUILTY TO METH CHARGES**

SPRINGFIELD, Mo. – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that a salesman for a southern Missouri wholesale distributor pleaded guilty in federal court today to participating in a conspiracy to distribute ingredients used to manufacture methamphetamine.

Operation Ice Palace is a long-term investigation into the illegal sale of large quantities of over-the-counter cold medications to methamphetamine manufacturers in southwest Missouri. Operation Ice Palace resulted in a series of indictments by a federal grand jury against 53 defendants.

Larry L. Crow, 38, of Mountain Home, Ark., pleaded guilty before U.S. District Judge Richard E. Dorr this afternoon to participating in a conspiracy to distribute pseudoephedrine, knowing that it would be used to manufacture methamphetamine, and to possessing a firearm in relation to that offense.

Crow, a sales agent for D and D Distributing, sold large amounts of pseudoephedrine to various retail stores in southwest Missouri. **Crow** was told to sell the stores 488 boxes of pseudoephedrine per month, Graves said, and to provide the stores with multiple invoices for each transaction so as to appear to conform with Drug Enforcement Administration regulations. During this time, Graves said, **Crow** sold pseudoephedrine to numerous stores that were “non-traditional” markets for pseudoephedrine, such as liquor stores, bars, laundromats and adult video stores.

The most readily available amount that **Crow** was responsible for distributing was over three kilograms of pseudoephedrine.

During the time of the conspiracy, Graves added, **Crow** carried a .45-caliber Ruger

handgun. Under federal law, Graves explained, it is illegal to be in possession of a firearm in furtherance of a drug trafficking offense.

Under federal statutes, **Crow** could be subject to a mandatory minimum sentence of five years in federal prison without parole, up to life imprisonment without parole, plus a fine up to \$500,000. A sentencing hearing will be scheduled after the completion of a presentence investigation by the United States Probation Office.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Randall D. Eggert. Operation Ice Palace was investigated by the Internal Revenue Service, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, COMET (the Combined Ozarks Multi-jurisdictional Enforcement Team), the Missouri State Highway Patrol, the Greene County, Mo., Sheriff's Department, the Lawrence County, Mo., Sheriff's Department, the Ozark County, Mo., Sheriff's Department, the Arkansas State Police, and the Springfield, Mo., Police Department.

This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at

www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow